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The "KING'S WISH"

A DRAMA IN THREE ACTS

By
MAI PIPES

Author of "The Master's Voice"
"The White Wolf"
"The Fairy Well"

MAI PIPES, Author and Publisher

4613 N. Kedzie Avenue

Chicago, Illinois

1915

The Master's Voice

An Historical Play in Three Acts

By MAI PIPES

Written for Girls. The Scenes take place in a palace, and on a house-top in Jerusalem, between Palm Sunday and Good Friday.

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"The White Wolf"

A Fairy Play in Two Acts

By MAI PIPES

Adapted for intermediate grades. Sparkling, rippling; full of life and beauty and the sweet lesson of love for all dumb things.

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no. 1.

CAST

KING EDWARD, IV, of ENGLAND

DAGOBERT, his Jester

PRINCE CHARLES, his Guest

BYRON BRUNFELS

COUNT STAUM

DUKE OF NORFOLK

LORD HASTINGS

MONTANO, Noble of India

SIR WALTER

SIR ROBERT

SIR JAMES

TRESSEL, a Page

A KNAVE

ROBINE, a Sprite

MUSTARD SEED

BITTER SWEET

COBWEB

MOTH

THISTLE

FLUTE

BLUEGRASS

CLOVER

} Sprites in Robin's
Merry Company

Hunters, Nobles, Pages, Attendants.

THE KING'S WISH

ACT I.

(An open landscape—the entire stage; across stage runs a little streamlet. A few steps lead from the stage to a rustic bridge which leads L. to a small footpath. ROBIN perched upon rail of bridge. Enter MOTH, a Sprite.)

(ROBIN, a merry sprite; nimble of foot, red cloak about him.)

ROBIN.—How now, sprite, whither wander you?

(MOTH, another merry youth dressed in brown.)

MOTH.—Over hill, over dale.

ROBIN.—Hold; the King of all this country round
Doth keep his rest tonight upon this ground.

MOTH.—The King

ROBIN.—Aye, the great King of all this country round,
He passeth with his party of the hunt,
And weary heart and discontented mind
And all that follow of their kind keep him sorry
company
He doth not, will not, know
That love of self and what self love pursues
Is like a silver, airy bubble in the hand;
So now take heed when the great king comes this way
Thou, hidden neath bush and bow, do stay
Until I speak the word,
Then summon forth thy merry band of sprites.
The eyes of king shall ne'er behold such sights

THE KING'S WISH

As these I mean for him tonight.
So look thou be thy merriest.

MOTH.—Fear not. I'll more than merry be,
For none could glower when they wait on thee.
(Both merrily laugh.)

ROBIN.—Come now a song
Then for a little hence.
(Robin whistles thrice; immediately the woods spring to life with company of followers; song and dance; full chorus. When hunter's horn is heard off, dance breaks up.)

ROBIN.—Hence away. Now all is well.
One aloof stand sentinel.
(All disappear. Enter King and two attendants, who throw cloak upon ground for King, laugh without.)
(KING, an old man 60 years of age; long cloak and beard.)

KING.—Leave me and bid them not to trouble me till I call. Away!
Alack the day! both heart and weary body crave their rest.
An hour's sleep I'll snatch, while yon joyous party laugh and hunt.
So another day has come to end.
What means it all;
Is life one endless round of weary waking, tasks, and sleep again?
Or is there something more we do not know,
Some place where all longings of the heart may be fulfilled?
My weary body will no longer bear the tasks I do put it to.
If I might but feel the new life of twenty summers bounding through my veins, linked with the wisdom of sixty years, methinks I would forego my crown,

THE KING'S WISH

And take upon my hands some worthy task to do.
(*Head falls upon his breast. Robin suddenly appears and dances about him.*)

ROBIN.—Amen, amen, to that resolve say I.

(*KING, looks up as though suddenly aroused from sleep.*)

KING.—Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are some shrewd and knavish sprite.
Who holds within the hollow of his hand
Strange powers sought throughout the land,
By all save fool and wise man,
That mystic power to make things other than they
seem.

ROBIN.—Thou speak'st aright
I am that merry wanderer of the night.
Robin is my name.
I jest to make men smile,
And grant their wishes when it pleaseth me.

KING.—So merry fool, wilt grant me one?
If not, with thy foolery I am done!

ROBIN.—Nay, speak thy wish, O! Mortal King,
Come stand within the center of this ring.
What thou seest when thou dost wake,
In all thy earnestness do take.
Use well this gift I give to thee,
Ere I do take it back to me.
Youth and health, young limbs and gold,
The glittering case of a weary soul—
Youth's laughter in hand with wisdom's tears,
Young in limb, but old in years.
So is thy wish, O! Mortal King,
Now we shall see what it doth bring.

(*Passes hand over King; leads him to shadow of bush. Music—sprites dance—laughter—tinkle of silver bells; call of hunter's horn off; sprites again disappear. Re-enter King, clad in bright attire, youthful face and figure, with page upon his shoulder; laugh without.*)

THE KING'S WISH

KING.—Is this myself, this strength within my arm?

(Little lad jumps from his shoulder and skips about.)

This glow upon my cheek,
This spring, this joy of step,
Oh lad, tell me I do but dream.
Or if all is as it seems;
Speak lad.

LAD.—My lord, thou art noble and good to look upon.

(KING. Laughing.)

KING.—Right bravely said, my lad.

But is my hair of raven hue,
My limbs strong and straight to do
The merry dancing step of youth?
Speak my lad and speak the truth.

LAD.—Upon my youth, my lord,
Speak I the truth.

KING.—So be it then.

(Throws back head and laughs; goes to center of bridge, calls off.)

O! Who's without?

Lead forth the charger of the King,
One swift and sure as bird upon the wing.
And sword of steel, that trusty page hath borne,
Since age my strength of arm hath shorn.
Bid knights of skill and young assemblage gay,
To keep me merry company.

Forth, forth, I say.

(Enter lords, attendants pages, hunters, etc; laughter; bugling; music and song. "As You Like It," Hunt Scene, "The Hunters Horn." Song. Two attendants at end, with charger, center bridge. Mount the KING.)

KING.—Away, away, to sport, all sorrow we disdain.
For youth hath come to me again.

THE KING'S WISH

ACT II.

(A court of the palace; enter KING EDWARD, laughing at the antics of his jester; jester sings merry song.)

KING.—So my good fellow, thou art a merry fool.

Albeit between thee and me,

I do swear I love thee.

Ah here's our chief guest,

And pray whither upon what quest.

(Enter two attendants and PRINCE CHARLES.)

PRINCE CHARLES.—To ride my lord.

KING.—Is it far you ride?

PRINCE.—As far as will fill up the time twixt this and supper.

KING.—So speed you then.

Fail not our feast.

PRINCE.—Forego thy wines and meats, my lord,

And thy company, to say the least? Not I!

So now farewell,

I'll with thee dine.

At merry suppertime.

(Exit with two attendants.)

KING.—Come, Dagobert, lead on with thy clownish dance and song.

(Exeunt.)—(Enter opposite side of stage two noble-men, supposed friends but plotters against the

KING. BARON BRUNFELS and COUNT STAUM;
STAUM looks after KING.)

STAUM.—Poor fool, he thinks to cheat me of the crown,

By this new youth and strength of his.

Methought his years were numbered and so soon,

I the rightful heir would be. *(Turns to BRUNFELS.)*

Remember this: If thou betray me so much as by word or look, thou diest.

BRUNFELS.—Have no fear, my lord.

My own welfare is nearer me than thine.

THE KING'S WISH

STAUM.—Our pledge stands good then; all is well.
So now my trusty noble lord, farewell.

BRUNFELS.—Nay, I beg another moment stay,
And once again instructions say,
That I may the more quickly follow them.

STAUM.—So be it; brief let me be.
As is the custom of king and court to fall into slumber's
Clutch after banquet reveling.
Do thou then steal upon him so
On pretense of smoothing locks and mantle, go
Bend over him; plunge thy dagger deep within his
heart.
Then sink beside him,
In slumber do appear.
Coming upon him thus,
Will I the court arouse,
And make deep grief o'er our beloved King.
Thus wealth and power to us both, I'll bring.
(*Enter KING unobserved.*)

BRUNFELS.—Methinks I never knew so fair and foul a
day;
I would I were a thousand leagues away.
(*KING comes down stage—both start.*)

KING.—It were better so my lord,
That same wish could be fulfilled,
For ere another day is done,
Thy breath and life is stilled,
My lords.
(*Enter court, pages, noblemen, hunters, etc.*)
My lords, a vile and treacherous plot, we now do face.
Traitors two; whom once I loved as friends.

ALL.—Traitors, my lord?

KING.—Aye. They stand before ye now,
And fear, not shame, doth sit upon their brow,
My lord of Norfolk.

THE KING'S WISH

NORFOLK.—Here, most gracious liege.

(KING *laughs bitterly*.)

KING.—Norfolk, we must have knocks; Ha! must we not?

NORFOLK.—We must both give and take, my gracious lord.

KING.—Words of fair comfort and encouragement.

He hath no friends, but who are friends of fear.

(*Turns to STAUM and BRUNFELS.*)

So be thy graves my peace.

Hence, away with them, out of my sight.

(BRUNFELS and STAUM *here exchange a word between them—to the effect that at the KING's death sentence, BRUNFELS falls at feet of KING—with:—*)

BRUNFELS.—My lord, mercy, I beg.

(STAUM *makes for exit—two guards suddenly appear to bar his way—he steps back, laughing mockingly.*)

LORD HASTINGS—(*Advances*)—O King, a grievance grim and old

With yon same Staum, I hold.

Bid him draw and cross with me,

We'll satisfaction have, I'll warrant thee.

KING.—Dost thou this for love of me?

So be it then—Draw.

One for life he holds so dear,

And one for love of me.

(*Duel; three rounds; last position STAUM drops sword. HASTINGS takes advantage; makes to run him through, as KING draws and intercepts him.*)

KING.—Hold! 'Tis foul advantage thou dost take;

Know thou, thy honor is at stake?

Draw, draw with me,

By royal right, I give to thee

The boon to make thy sovereign pay

The penalty of taking in thy play.

Draw, draw, I say.

HASTINGS.—Nay, O King, I will not draw.

A boon my sovereign, for my service done!

THE KING'S WISH

KING.—I pray thee, peace; my soul is full of sorrow.

HASTINGS.—I will not rise, unless your highness grant.

KING.—Then speak at once; what is it thou doth demand?

HASTINGS.—At thy court, my lord, a power I'd be,
To take command of none save thee.

(KING looks upon him bitterly.)

KING.—So thou, too, art like the rest,
Thou but love me for thyself.

When I put thee to the test.

(Voice without; Hail, Edward of England, Hail.

*Enter two attendants, six pages bearing caskets of
gold and two nobles of the Court of India.)*

MONTANO.—Great and mighty King,
Greetings we bring.
Wealth of gold, glittering gems,
The ruler of our conquered land doth send,
Beseeching thee to grant us peace,
And thou thy persecutions cease.

KING.—Arise, unlock for me thy caskets.

*(PAGES approach; KING runs fingers through pearls
and precious stones; COURT gathered about.)*

Precious gems and glittering gold,
For thee, men their lives have sold.
For thee, poor stones and golden dust,
We give up faith and love and trust.
We put thee in the balance quite,
With all we hold most dear in life.
So have I youth and precious gold
The glittering case of a weary soul.
Youth's laughter and wisdom's tears,
Young in limb, but old in years.

*(PAGE takes caskets away. KING goes up stage,
places hands over head—back to audience.)*

SIR ROBERT.—*(To noble of India's Court.)*

A happy time of day, good friend.

Return unto thy lord.

Commend our court to him.

THE KING'S WISH

Tell him Edward doth consent to leave his land in peace.

So long as he these pretty offerings make.

(Laughs and bedecks himself with jewels.)

SIR WALTER.—*(Aside to PAGE who is dancing a step or two.)*

How now, my merry page, what is thy name?

PAGE.—My name, my lord, is Tressel,
And your most obedient subject.

SIR WALTER.—Art thou, indeed?

TRESSEL.—Prove me, my most gracious lord.

SIR WALTER.—Darest thou sing and dance for us?

TRESSEL.—Aye, my lord.

SIR WALTER.—Good, and I will love thee and prefer thee too.

TRESSEL.—Tis done, my lord.

(Sings merry song and dances; after dance, all the train go off with exception of PAGE. SIR ROBERT in conversation with KING.)

SIR ROBERT.—If thou couldst make laws, O noble King,
That would happiness to thy subjects bring.
Mayhap the content thou seek,
Would company with thee keep.

KING.—Alas, good friend,
I too well know,
Thou meanest well when thou counsel so.
But it be not in power of man or king,
To all happiness to bring.
When thou dost for some,
Thou but offendest another one.

SIR WALTER.—Then your majesty should a war declare;
Surely such would banish care.
To thy kingdom it would add:
Cover your majesty with glory,
And make thee renowned in song and story.

THE KING'S WISH

KING.—That is what the Persians of old have said,
And now they lie forgotten and dead.
Their mighty empire a desert be;
Their palaces royal but ruins to see.
Where weary caravans and camels sleep,
As wind and sand do o'er them sweep.

SIR JAMES.—Ah, sire, come thy coach and six.
Travel; it would please thee.
New sights, new friends.
With all my heart, I beseech you bid us farewell.
And when thou dost return,
We'll gladly listen to what thou hast to tell.

KING.—Spoken like a good fellow that respects his reputation. (*Court laughs.*)
Knowest thou not, people are the same,
Where'er they be.
According to clime, a difference we see.
But men are the same the wide world o'er;
Where e're thou goest, fools thou wilt find,
With misers and rich men and thieves thou wilt dine.

SIR JAMES.—Great and wise is your majesty's word.
Travel is, to say the least, absurd.

ALL.—(*Repeat.*) Great and wise is your majesty's word.
Travel is, to say the least, absurd.

KING.—(*Turns upon them in anger.*)
Aye, ever is one wise and great,
When power and riches upon him wait.
Ye all love me for my wealth:
Ye all wish me life and health.
Because of the power within my hand,
To banish ye from house and land;
Ye crouch and grovel and bend the knee,
Only from cowardly fear of me.
Ye tramp my halls; ye eat my bread,
And would laugh to see me lying dead.
Away, I say; out of my sight!
The miserable, understanding light,

THE KING'S WISH

Has shown me the souls of ye.
Begone, e're rage consumeth me.

(All back off in fear; KING exhausted at foot of throne; soft music.)

And so ye go. Ah! now I see
In every heart, I'll forgotten be.
O! wondrous power that ruleth me,
Thou keepest all in harmony.
The Winter's snow with ice and cold,
Old age and understanding soul.
Spring's blossoms and promises of life:
Youth's hope and eagerness for strife.

(Enter FOOL; music; FOOL with flower, catches airy imaginary butterflies.)

DAGOBERT.—Come, let me catch thee for my flower,
Butterfly, why do you flutter beyond my power.
To catch you and give you honey sweet,
That I and my flower for you keep.

(Sings song of butterfly and flower and falls to sleep at KING's feet at foot of throne.)

KING.—Poor fool, sleep on. In childish play,
Thou hast found the way
That leads to peace.
How like a little child, we are,
Knowing so little of our life,
With its loves hopes and bitter strife.
But like yon fool that loves to keep
Locked in his arms some treasure sweet, I too;
In calm content, can fall asleep.
For understanding now waits on me,
That life is so deep in tune with harmony,
Even when notes are lowest,
That still I canst lay me down in peace and sleep;
For a wondrous power his watch doth keep,
And will not me forget.

THE KING'S WISH

ACT III.

SCENE I.

(*Same as Act I—ROBIN perched upon rail of bridge.*)

ROBIN.—Through the forest I have gone.

But Edward found I none.

With discontent, he'll come this way.

To return my magic gift today.

Come now a merry dance and airy song,

'Ere the King doth come along.

(*Clasps hands; sprites appear, merry, quick; circle dance, flower dance. ROBIN tries to catch others catches scarf; twirls.*)

ROBIN.—Oh, I am out of breath in this fond chase

The faster I go, the lesser is my grace.

Clover, Moth, Cobweb, Mustard Seed.

CLOVER.—Ready.

MOTH.—Ready.

COBWEB.—And I.

MUSTARD SEED.—And I.

ROBIN.—Out of this wood, do not desire to go,

Thou wilt remain here whether thou wilt or no.

I am a sprite of no common rate.

Summer still doth tend upon my state.

So mind, now, what I say to thee.

Then follow, follow after me.

ALL.—Where shall we go, Robin?

ROBIN.—Again the King doth come this way.

To return my unwelcome gift today.

Moth, be thou courteous to this gentleman,

Laugh and dance before his eyes.

Steal away his heavy sighs.

Cobweb, take his mantle blue,

Go wait upon him, do.

Thou, Clover, his charger keep,

And mind thou fallest not asleep.

THE KING'S WISH

Mustard Seed, on me thou'll wait,
As well becomes my royal state.

THISTLE.—Methinkest thou a king should be,
For none could mock the royal stride of thee.

ROBIN.—I have it; the king I'll be.
While we wait his company.

*(All SPRITES appear, point and laugh and make fun
of ROBIN.)*

ALL.—A King, Robin a King.

MOTH.—And here's a marvelous convenient place for our
rehearsal,

This green plot shall be our stage.

ALL.—Aye, aye, long live Robin, King of the woods.

ROBIN.—I thank thee, my good sprites.

MUSTARD SEED.—Drop it, Robin, drop it.

THISTLE.—Hail Robin, the first king of sprites.
We crown thee.

(Wreath of thistle flowers.)

BITTER SWEET.—We robe thee.

ALL.—We robe thee.

FLUTE.—We sceptre thee.

ALL.—We sceptre thee.

BLUE GRASS.—Throne him.

ALL.—Throne him.

*(Two place ROBIN upon their shoulders, midst roars
of laughter.)*

BLUE GRASS.—Be gracious to us, O sweet King!
And wealth and power to us bring.

BITTER SWEET.—Upon thy subjects, meek and mild,
Bestow thou a pretty smile.

THISTLE.—With thy dainty little foot,
Sanctify the ground, where e'er 'tis put.

*(All shake with laughter and dance round, hands on
each others shoulders, repeating.)*

THE KING'S WISH

ALL.—With thy dainty little foot,
Sanctify the ground where e'er 'tis put.
(Hunter's horn off; all stand still in midst of merry making.)

ROBIN.—Hence, away, now all is well.
One aloof stand sentinel.
(All disappear; enter KING; walks slowly over bridge, pauses, looks about, while ROBIN and four SPRITES are in background. KING leans heavily against rail of bridge.)

ROBIN.—Good King, you faint with wandering in the wood.

We'll rest if you thinketh good.

KING.—Aye, Robin, be it so, find me out a bed.
For upon this bank will I rest my head.
(Clover takes cloak, places it upon ground; KING throws himself upon it.)

KING.—Help me, Robin, help me; do thy best
To pluck this discontent from out my breast.
Aye me. For pity, I didst
Make a foolish wish,
Ne'er again shall I know
The faith and allusions of twenty old.
Nothing, nothing, can I love,
In earth below or clouds above.
My old soul in youthful form
Grows more weary day by day.
Would that alway ever, we
Could understand the harmony
Of this great plan of life,
Living all the days in calm content.
Doing the best with what is sent.
Knowing we receive but what is meant.
Then would peace dwell within our hearts.

ROBIN.—Thou speakest aright.
And peace I see this night
Will attend thee.

THE KING'S WISH

KING.—Meanest thou to take thy gift
And from my shoulders this youth to lift?

ROBIN.—Nay, nay, that can not be.
All thy kingdom could not buy it me.
But rest come upon thy heart.
A secret now I shall impart.
Still with thy old heart and youthful hand,
Thou mayest find happiness, throughout the land.
Forget thyself.
Go forth from thy palace, clothed in humility's
somber robe.
Love even the meanest of thy subjects.
In patience meet unkindness.
Be Master of Thyself!
And with a smile upon thy lip,
Lo! thou wilt find thou dost sip
The drink of happiness.

(Music soft and low.)

(KING goes upon bridge; ROBIN claps hands; MOTH dances before KING; CLOVER throws his cloak about him; ROBIN to side of stage, calling attendants of the wood; a wild dance; stage full; merry whirl; Hunter's Horn off; KING in deep thought, repeats.)

KING.—Forget thyself. Go forth clothed in humility's
somber robe,
Love even the meanest of thy subjects.
In patience meet unkindness.
Be Master of Thyself.
And with a smile upon thy lip,
Lo! thou wilt find thou dost sip
The drink of happiness.

(KING comes down stage. All sprites gradually disappear; KING reclining on cloak on ground, goes to sleep; music soft.)

CURTAIN.

THE KING'S WISH

SCENE 2. (*Same; music soft. KING clad as at beginning of 1st act, man of 60 years, still under the influence of his dream.*)

EDWARD.—Forget thyself.

In patience meet unkindness.

Be Master of Thyself and—

(*Pauses; looks about.*)

I pray you tell,

How came I here, so (*Smiles*),

'Tis not true.

I did but dream a strange, wild dream.

(*Hunter's Horn off in distance.*)

Love even the meanest of thy subjects.

Be Master of Thyself.

Aye, I will, good Robin.

Hear me.

My strength and wisdom, I now do give,

To right as long as I shall live.

Honor and love, my rule shall be

And all who come will be served by me.

(*Blast of horn without.*)

So they come, my huntsmen bold,

Wondrous power that ruleth me,

Strength, I beg that a King they'll see

And not a puppet in silken robe.

(*Another blast.*)

KING.—Oh, oh, oh.

(*Blast louder and shouts and music; hunter's song, all enter; KING center on bridge; enter two attendants with captive between them throws him at KING's feet; KING, hand upraised, hushes shouts. Guard strikes knave.*)

GUARD.—Hold thy peace, knave.

KING.—Nay, not so swift, my faithful guard.

Wouldst thou be dealt with as hard?

Come arise; I pardon thee thy life (*to knave*) e'er
thou doth ask it.

THE KING'S WISH

Take this silver, go thy way.
But a promise I exact of thee.

KNAVE.—Fortune and victory, my liege, await on thee.
Thy will.

KING.—In truth thou art a cheerful promiser.
(*All laugh.*)

KNAVE.—My loving mother taught me, sire.

KING.—Peace. Touch not that name with the evil of
thy lips.

But if thou hast one spark of honor left,
For her sake, mend thy ways.
Give him a bowl of wine and robe that befits
A man; a horse and gold.
(*Knave kisses KING's hand.*)

KNAVE.—My liege, since thou hast faith in me,
'Twill not be lost, I warrant thee.

EDWARD.—(*To PRINCE*)—Good friend, a wild and fearful
dream, have I had this day.

Methought at last my wish of youth renewed had
come to me again, but the soul within me saw with
the understanding of the weary years
And what I suffered by the loss of that faith and
glad belief in everything
That only youth can know.
I care not even thee to tell.

PRINCE CHARLES.—O King, that high All-Seer that thou
dallied with,

Hath turned thy foolish wish upon thy head.
And gave in dreams what thou begged in jest.
Thus, doth he force the swords of foolish men
To turn their own points on their master's breast.

EDWARD.—Thou speak'st true, O noble prince.
But know that that same wild and foolish wish of
mine
Hath opened wide the eyes of mind and soul

THE KING'S WISH

And made me see
The all-wise harmony of God's great plan.
My few remaining years shall be
For England's peace and liberty.

PRINCE.—Then Peace lives once again.

God say Amen.

*(Call of the horn three times, sweet and clear; all
stand listening.)*

*(EDWARD center with PRINCE, full stage. Chorus.
Song "Hunter's Horn.")*

CURTAIN.

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